

IN THE CLAIMS:

Cancel claim 1 without prejudice or disclaimer.

Please amend the claims 22, 23, 29 and 30 as follows:

1 22. (Amended) A test tube, comprising:

2 a tube body of unitary construction comprising an enclosed sidewall and an integral
3 bottom that together define a tubular container having an open top, wherein said bottom has an
4 exterior surface upon which machine readable data is encoded within an opaque coating
5 deposited onto said exterior surface to uniquely identify said test tube.

1 23. (Amended) The test tube of claim 22, wherein said opaque coating

2 comprises: a first layer of light colored opaque material deposited onto said exterior surface;
3 and a second layer of dark colored opaque material deposited onto said first layer, with select
4 portions of said second layer having been removed to define said machine readable data.

1 29. (Amended) A method of manufacturing a test tube, comprising the steps of:

2 providing a tube body of unitary construction comprising an enclosed sidewall with an open
3 top and an integral bottom with an exterior surface;

4 applying an opaque coating to said exterior surface; and
5 encoding machine readable data within said opaque coating.

1 30. (Amended) The method of claim 29 wherein the application of said opaque

2 coating comprises the steps of:

3 a) depositing a first layer of opaque material onto said exterior surface; and

4 b) depositing a second layer of opaque material onto said first layer, wherein said

5 first and second layers are of contrasting colors.